United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General is "greatly concerned" over renewed outbreak of hostilities in Sarajevo today; calls on all parties to halt fighting and to cooperate with efforts of United Nations Protection Force to bring about cease-fire; the Security Council holds consultations on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina; the Committee on Admission of new Member States to consider membership of Slovenia and Croatia tomorrow.

+ Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky, in address at Disarmament Conference in Geneva, says United Nations approach to arms control and disarmament issues will be "action-oriented and be given high priority".

+ New Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Edward Joseph Perkins, presents his credentials to Secretary-General.

+ Environmental youth activists from over 40 countries gather at Headquarters for two-day 1992 Global Youth Forum.

+ Secretary-General to open week-long Congress on international trade law at Headquarters next Monday, 18 May.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed great concern about the renewed outbreak of hostilities in Sarajevo today and has called urgently upon all forces in the city to halt the fighting, according to a statement today. He also urged all concerned to cooperate with the efforts of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to bring about a cease-fire.

In a statement issued through his Spokesman, the Secretary-General said he deplored the loss of life and destruction in Sarajevo. He was particularly concerned about the safety of the United Nations Protection Force headquarters personnel in Sarajevo, who number about 350. The plan for their partial and

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temporary relocation had not been implemented when heavy fighting resumed this morning. They now find themselves in a dangerous situation and had taken shelter at three different locations.

According to the statement, the outbreak of fighting occurred when Muslim forces attacked Yugoslav Federal Army (JNA) positions early this morning, and the JNA responded with heavy artillery. The Deputy Force Commander and Chief of Staff of UNPROFOR have been trying to negotiate a cease-fire, but the meeting had so far been precluded by the fighting. It was hoped that a meeting could be arranged for tomorrow morning.

With regard to the safety of United Nations personnel in Sarajevo, the Spokesman said the United Nations personnel had been caught in a crossfire between the two fighting groups. He said 275 United Nations staff had taken refuge in the bunker of the hotel where they were staying.

According to the Spokesman, the Arab group had requested a formal meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Council was currently holding bilateral consultations on the Secretary-General's report on Bosnia-Herzegovina and on the situation in the area.

Also tonight, the Security Council has decided to refer the admission of Slovenia and Croatia for membership to the United Nations to the Committee on the Admission of new Members. The two requests will be considered tomorrow morning.

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In an address today at the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Vladimir Petrovsky, emphasized that the United Nations approach to arms control and disarmament issues would be "action-oriented and be given high priority". Those issues were now increasingly recognized as constituents of an international security agenda in which issues should be addressed through preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-keeping.

The Under-Secretary-General expressed his fervent hope that delegates would successfully overcome the remaining obstacles towards the finalization of a chemical weapons convention during this session. The Secretariat was ready to be an active partner with member countries in promoting new approaches to disarmament and arms control issues, Mr. Petrovsky said.

The second part of the Disarmament Conference, which began on Monday, 11 May, is scheduled to end on 26 June.

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Edward Joseph Perkins, the new Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, today presented his credentials to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

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Mr. Perkins was previously Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Personnel at the United States Department of State. He was also Ambassador to South Africa from 1986 to 1989, and Ambassador to Liberia from 1985 to 1986. Prior to his service with the State Department, he was employed with the Agency for International Development.

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More than two thousand youth activists from over 40 countries gathered at United Nations Headquarters today for the two-day 1992 Global Youth Forum. They will bring with them details of projects that they have developed to help alleviate environmental problems in their local communities.

The Global Youth Forum has been organized annually by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) since 1988, but this year's Forum is the largest to date and the world's largest international environmental youth gathering. Guest speakers from a variety of disciplines will augment the youth conference, joining with UNEP leadership to mark the 20th anniversary of UNEP's founding in 1972.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali will open a week-long Congress on international trade law on Monday morning, 18 May, in the General Assembly Hall.

Organized by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the Congress forms part of the twenty-fifth session of UNCITRAL, which is currenly meeting in New York, and is a contribution to the activities of the United Nations Decade of International Law. The Congress, the theme of which is "Uniform commercial law in the twenty-first century", will conclude on Friday, 22 May.

Participants in the Congress, including practicing lawyers, corporate counsels, ministry officials, judges, arbitrators and teachers of law, will receive up-to-date information and practical guidance concerning principal legal texts of universal relevance, and will voice their practical needs as a basis for future work by UNCITRAL and other agencies involved in the unification and harmonization of international trade law.

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